

Intelligence Summary
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NEAR EAST/AFRICA DIVISION
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WORKING PAPER

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NEAR EAST/AFRICA DIVISION

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

Vol. V No. 4

For Week Ending
1 February 1950

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Iraq

After 5 February, what? 1
Nuri Pasha may unseat Prime Minister Jawdat

Afghanistan-Pakistan

Karachi's attitude hardens 1
Pakistan moving toward showdown on tribal issue

Noted in Brief

Turkey, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Iraq 2

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NEAR/EAST AFRICA INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

IRAQ

After 5 February, what?: The present Iraqi Government may have a short life if former Prime Minister Nuri Said marshals his new Constitutional Union Party against it. Although the Jawdat Government has not made a definitive statement of policy, it has already stimulated a good deal of criticism. Many Iraqis disapprove the apparent substitution of a policy of closer cooperation with Egypt (of which Deputy Prime Minister Pachachi's current visit to Cairo is indicative) for the union-with-Syria movement which Nuri spearheaded. While Prime Minister Jawdat satisfied a popular demand by his abolition of martial law, there is little enthusiasm for the new banking laws and the tighter import controls which the government has put into effect or for the tax reforms it is rumored to be preparing.

The showdown, if any, is likely to follow the reconvening of Parliament on 5 February, at which time Jawdat is expected to announce his program for the country. Nuri has signed up in his party both the President and Vice President of Parliament and reportedly has 50 deputies on his rolls. Should he decide to take the reins of government back into his own hands, it is improbable that Jawdat could muster sufficient support to stop him.

AFGHANISTAN-PAKISTAN

Karachi's attitude hardens: In announcing that it will counter Afghanistan's persistent agitation of the tribal issue with such positive measures as the stationing of regular troops at two key border posts and the initiation of a propaganda campaign of its own among the tribes, Pakistan is embarking on a new course designed to force a showdown with the Afghans. The moves which Karachi is now making are logical ones for demonstrating that Pakistan will not meekly submit to vilification or dismemberment; they may thus serve both to check the ardor of the Afghans and to calm the tribesmen, who have tended to regard the Pakistani Government as weak and timorous. Moreover, the new policy, by diverting the force of Pakistani emotions from the Indians to the Afghans, should reduce the possibility of unwanted incidents along the Kashmir border. The Pakistanis apparently feel that the present offers them their best opportunity for dealing with the Afghan question; while Pakistan's

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new firmness comes at a time when its relations with India are still dangerously tense, the Kashmir negotiations are deadlocked and there is virtually no likelihood that India would commence military operations in Kashmir or East Bengal without provocation. If Pakistan is able to stand up under the strain of economic warfare with India, as it believes it can, it thus has a breathing spell of several months in which to deal with other outstanding problems. Although Pakistan's present course is likely to intensify the strain between it and Afghanistan and conceivably might even lead to a shooting war, the Pakistanis evidently believe that it may eventually result in a settlement of the tribal question.

NOTED IN BRIEF

Turkish misgivings about US aid without a written security agreement are still evident although the Turkish Government has made no formal approach to the US for some months. On the occasion of Ambassador Wadsworth's recent departure for Washington, Foreign Minister Sadak informally requested that consideration be given to holding Turkish-US military staff talks to consider common defense plans and mutual assistance in the event of war. He also urged that--if only to deter aggression--announcement be made to the USSR of the intention of the US to join Turkey in resisting aggression. Although the Turks may not expect their pleas to achieve any concrete results in the near future, the matter of security guarantees is so important to them that they will continue their efforts to obtain US commitments.

* * *

Improvement in Turkey's balance of trade and foreign exchange position is foreshadowed by the announcement of a bumper cotton crop and by the news that production in 1949 of refined sugar was far greater than in any preceding year. In 1950 Turkey will thus be able to export more raw cotton and may well have to import no refined sugar at all.

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In future, perpetrators of Syrian coups will probably be able to deal with the Paris firm of Bertrand on a cash and carry basis only. Efforts on the part of this firm to collect 80,000 francs in payment for a

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baton ordered by the late Marshal Zaim appear to have been unavailing. At one point, the Syrian Government indicated its intention of returning the baton to Bertrand, despite offers of reportedly as much as 200,000 francs by souvenir collectors. Since the Shishakli coup, however, there has been no further word concerning the whereabouts of the baton. It is quite probable that the new owner is Shishakli-- but very unlikely that the Paris firm has collected the 80,000 francs.

* * *

The much discussed Saudi Arabian loan to Syria now awaits the King's decision. Even should this decision be favorable, it is not clear where the money would come from. SAG officials are fully cognizant of the inability of SAG to aid Syria financially, and their anxieties have not been lessened by ARAMCO's questioning of SAG's need for financial assistance if they approve the loan. These officials, reluctant to do so themselves, have requested that Ambassador Childs talk to the King and attempt to discourage his unrealistic approach to the subject. Meanwhile, the Syrian Government has announced that negotiations have been successful. This announcement, which seems premature, may have unfortunate repercussions upon the prestige of the current regime should the money not be forthcoming.

* * *

Iraqi Jews are taking advantage of the lifting of martial law to crowd underground routes into Iran, from which they can find ways of getting to Israel. Penalties for illegal flight are slight under present law, and only a few police have been added to check the main routes. The escapees are receiving considerable assistance along the way from the local citizenry, who apparently have no wish to impede the development of a lucrative business.

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